



Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department

School Health News

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The Asset Minute

Brought to you by: The Lincoln Lancaster County Asset Builders

Asset # 5 Caring School Climate

Definition: School provides a caring, encouraging environment.

Invisible Mentoring

At a staff meeting have the name of every student listed on sheets of paper hung around the room. Each staff person should have a marker. Ask the staff to go around and put a check beside the names of students they have meaningful interactions with each day. A great variation on this would be to give each member of the staff two markers of different colors and use one for a positive interaction, and one for intervention or behavior correction. Those students with several marks are well connected to their school.

Have everyone look at the names of the young people that have no marks beside them, and have staff members choose students they encounter daily to begin building that positive relationship with until every child has at least one mark beside their name. The key to Invisible Mentoring is to try to make sure the students don't know they are being mentored. Having the staff do small things to get to know the students on their 'list', such as asking them about their day and learning personal interests will help foster those relationships.

Prior to doing this activity with staff or volunteers it might be helpful to do "Who Was There for Me?" In this activity break the group into pairs and have them choose someone from their youth who made a difference in their lives. You can make the activity truly challenging by asking that they choose someone other than their parents. Give each pair about five minutes to share with each other and then ask for volunteers to share with the whole group. Often times the people who touch our lives as young people do so in ways that are very small, the work of many moments that turns into something much larger in our lives. This activity will set the stage for what kinds of things staff and volunteers can do to build new relationships with students. Please note that this activity might be useful in faith communities, agencies, businesses, camps and other places where adults work with and around young people.

For information about training in the 40 Developmental Assets please contact David Humm with the Lincoln Lancaster County Health Department at 441-8043 OR Teri Effle at the Lincoln Council on Alcoholism and Drugs at 475-2694.

